

Message Text

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PAGE 01 STATE 211706

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TO USMISSION USUN NEW YORK IMMEDIATE

C O N F I D E N T I A L STATE 211706

NODIS

FOR S/S-S CRAIG JOHNSTONE

FOLLOWING REPEAT MEXICO 7684 SENT SECSTATE DATED AUG 29.

QUOTE

C O N F I D E N T I A L MEXICO 7684

NODIS

E.O. 11652: GDS

TAGS: PFOR, MM, XF, UN

SUBJECT: ECHEVERRIA PROPOSALS RE MIDDLE EAST

FOR SECRETARY KISSINGER FROM AMBASSADOR

1. ECHEVERRIA ASKED ME TO CALL ON HIM LAST NIGHT TO HEAR HIS VERSION OF HIS RECENT THIRD WORLD TRIP, DETAILS OF WHICH ARE BEING REPORTED SEPARATELY. DURING CONVERSATION HE ASKED ME SPECIFICALLY TO RAISE WITH YOU FOLLOWING PROPOSAL REGARDING PALESTINE SITUATION, WHICH HE SAID WOULD BE MAIN SUBJECT OF RABASA'S PROPOSED VISIT WITH YOU.

(A) ECHEVERRIA IS FOLLOWING CLOSELY YOUR EFFORTS TO ESTABLISH PEACE IN THE MIDDLE EAST AND WISHES YOU ALL
CONFIDENTIAL

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PAGE 02 STATE 211706

POSSIBLE SUCCESS.

(B) HE HIMSELF WAS ANGUISHED BY SITUATION AND TENSIONS THAT HE ENCOUNTERED IN AREA. HE DID EVERYTHING WHILE IN ARAB COUNTRIES TO PREACH AGAINST EXPULSION OF ISRAEL FROM UN AND WHILE IN ISRAEL TO ADVOCATE A NATIONAL HOME FOR PALESTINIAN PEOPLE.

(C) EXCEPT FOR BOUMEDIENNE, WHOM HE FOUND VERY CLOSE-MINDED, HE FOUND OTHER LEADERS RELATIVELY RESPONSIVE. ARAFAT WAS AN EMOTIONAL MYSTIC BUT IN HIS OPINION BASICALLY A GOOD BUT SOMEWHAT SHALLOW MAN, EXCEPT FOR THE FACT THAT HE SEEMED TO BE VERY MUCH UNDER INFLUENCE OF TH SOVIETS. SHOULD YOUR PRESENT MISSION SUCCEED, AS HE SINCERELY HOPES, WE MUST STILL WORRY LEST SYRIA AND OTHER ARAB STATES TURN AGAINST EGYPT AND THIS MIGHT REQUIRE SOME OTHER TYPE OF CONTINUING ATTENTION. SIMILARLY, SHOULD YOUR MISSION NOT PROSPER FULLY, HE HOPES THAT YOU COULD CONTINUE TO WORK WITH DISCRETION UNDER SOME SORT OF INTERNATIONAL SCREEN WHICH HE PROPOSED AS FOLLOWS:

(1) ECHEVERRIA ON HIS FORTHCOMING VISIT TO UNGA (AND PRESUMABLY AFTER CONVERSATIONS WITH OTHER INTERESTED PARTIES) WOULD PROPOSE THAT UN INVITE THREE CHIEFS OF STATE TO FORM A CONCILIATION COMMITTEE TO WORK FOR MIDDLE EAST PEACE, BOTH ON THE SPOT IN EGYPT, ISRAEL AND FROM UN HEADQUARTERS. HE WOULD PROPOSE THAT SUCH A COMMITTEE BE COMPOSED OF THE SHAH OF IRAN ("A MOSLEM WHO HAS GOOD RELATIONS WITH THE ARABS AND AT THE SAME TIME IS A GOOD FRIEND OF ISRAEL'S, HAVING CONTINUED TO SELL THEM OIL"), THE PRESIDENT OF MEXICO HIMSELF ("UNIQUELY QUALIFIED BY VIRTUE OF HIS UNPRECEDENTED TRIP THROUGH THE AREA"), AND A EUROPEAN LEADER SUCH AS THE PRIME MINISTER OF SWEDEN, THE PRESIDENT OF FINLAND OR THE PRESIDENZ OF THE SWISS CONFEDERATION.

(2) SUCH A CONCILIATION COMMITTEE WOULD BE MORE THAN MERELY A SCREENAS IT WOULD SERVE A USEFUL PURPOSE IN ITSELF. IT WOULD ALSO PROVIDE A COVER FOR YOUR OWN CONTINUED ACTIVITIES, SHOULD YOUR PRESENT MISSION REGRETTABLY NOT REACH A FINAL SOLUTION. EVEN IF YOU SHOULD SUCCEED, THE PROPOSED CHIEFS OF STATE COMMITTEE WOULD SERVE TO KEEP OTHER ARAB STATES FROM CONFIDENTIAL

CONFIDENTIAL

PAGE 03 STATE 211706

NIBBLING AWAY AT THE EGYPTIAN AGREEMENT. MOST IMPORTANT OF ALL, BY PLACING THIS MATTER IN A UN CONTEXT (WHILE AT THE SAME TIME LINKING IT IN SUCH A WAY AS TO KEEP IT OUT OF THE BROUHAHA OF GENERAL ASSEMBLY POLITICS) IT WOULD STRENGTHEN THE UN SYSTEM AS A WHOLE AND HELP TO RESTORE ITS LUSTRE.

2. I THANKED PRESIDENT ECHEVERRIA FOR THE EXPOSITION OF HIS PLAN AND PROMISED TO REPORT IT TO YOU AT ONCE, OBSERVING THAT

PRIOR KNOWLEDGE WOULD MAKE YOUR CONVERSATION WITH RABASA MORE MEANINGFUL. I ASKED ECHEVERRIA WHETHER HIS PLAN ENVISAGED A WILLINGNESS TO STATION ON-THE-SPOT OBSERVERS REPRESENTING THE PROPOSED THREE CHIEFS OF STATE. ECHEVERRIA APPARENTLY HAD NOT THOUGHT OF THIS BUT ON REFLECTION SAID THAT HIS PLAN SHOULD IN INDEED INCLUDE ON-THE-SPOT OBSERVERS AND THAT THEY COULD EITHER WORK ALONG SIDE THE PROPOSED AMERICAN OBSERVERS, THUS DILUTING THEIR PRESENCE, OR COULD EVEN CARRY OUT THEIR OBSERVER FUNCTION WITHOUT THE AMERICANS, SHOULD YOUR OWN PLAN NOT SUCCEED.

3. IN CLOSING ECHEVERRIA REITERATED AGAIN HIS VERY STRONG HOPES FOR YOUR OWN SUCCESS, REPEATING THAT HIS PLAN WOULD BE PROPOSED ONLY AS A SUPPLEMENT TO YOUR EFFORTS AND INSURANCE IN CASE YOU DID NOT SUCCEED FULLY, AS WELL AS A MEANS OF RESTORING LUSTRE TO THE UN SYSTEM.

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UNQUOTE ROBINSON

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